NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-1311 AUGUST 19, 1976
FRED GALVAN

NORTH KOREA'S PICKAXE DIPLOMACY

ANNCR: NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN DISCUSSES THE WANTON MURDER OF TWO AMERICAN OFFICERS BY NORTH KOREAN GUARDS AND THE WOUNDING OF SEVERAL OTHER AMERICAN AND SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY PERSONNEL.

VOICE: THE INCIDENT HAS CAUSED A WAVE OF REVULSION AND ANGER IN THE UNITED STATES. BOTH PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER REFLECTED THIS IN STATEMENTS ISSUED IN THEIR NAMES WEDNESDAY (YESTERDAY). PRESIDENT FORD, IN A KANSAS CITY STATEMENT, USED SUCH WORDS AS "VICIOUS," "UNPROVOKED MURDER," AND "BRUTAL" AND "COWARDLY" TO CHARACTERIZE THE SLAYINGS BY PICKAXES AND PIKES IN THE HANDS OF THE NORTH KOREAN SOLDIERS. AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT A SPOKESMAN FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER DENOUNCED THE NORTH KOREAN MURDERS AND CALLED PYONGYANG'S ALLEGATION THAT UNITED NATIONS COMMAND PERSONNEL HAD FIRST ASSAULTED NORTH KOREAN GUARDS IN THE JOINT SECURITY AREA NEAR PANMUNJOM AS "A LIE AND FLAGRANT ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE." THE DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES HOLDS PYONGYANG DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CONSEQUENCES STEMMING FROM THE INCIDENT.

BOTH THE PRESIDENTIAL AND STATE DEPARTMENT REACTIONS CONTAIN SOME OF THE STRONGEST LANGUAGE EVER USED IN RESPONSE TO NORTH KOREAN ACTS OF PROVOCATION.

BEYOND THAT, THE NORTH KOREAN MURDERS RAISE CERTAIN QUESTIONS AS TO THE MOTIVES UNDERLYING THEM. THE MURDERS CAN ONLY BOLSTER THE POSITION OF THOSE WHO ARGUE FOR A CONTINUED UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING PRESENCE IN KOREA TO HELP PRESERVE THE UNEASY TWENTY-THREE YEAR OLD TRUCE. FOR THE MURDERS ACTUALLY UNDERLINE THE PERSISTENT AGGRESSIVENESS OF PYONGYANG. SECRETARY KISSINGER LAST MONTH TOOK NOTE OF THAT AGGRESSIVENESS WHEN HE CHARGED THAT NORTH KOREA--IN HIS WORDS--"IS TRYING TO ISOLATE OUR ALLY" BY DEMANDING WHAT HE

TERMED "THE UNCONDITIONAL DISOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND," AND UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN FORCES. SECRETARY KISSINGER, AS HIS PREDECESSORS HAVE DONE, ONCE MORE REITERATED THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO BOTH THE U.N. PEACE-KEEPING MANDATE AND ITS SOUTH KOREAN ALLY.

AND SO, IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY CREDIBLE EXPLANATION OF THE BRUTALITY BY PYONGYANG, THE ONLY CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN IS THAT IT HAS NOW STOOPED TO A NEW LOW IN BARBARISM--A BARBARISM PREVIOUSLY REFLECTED IN OTHER INCIDENTS SINCE THE KOREAN ARMISTICE. THOSE INCIDENTS HAVE COST THE LIVES OF MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND KOREANS AND FORTY-NINE AMERICANS AND THE WOUNDING OF MANY MORE BY NORTH KOREAN ATTACKERS.

IN ANY CASE, IF THE AIM OF PYONGYANG IN DELIBERATELY DEFENDING THE BRUTAL INCIDENT WAS TO ESCALATE THE LEVEL OF TENSION IN KOREA AND ELSEWHERE IT HAS SUCCEEDED. THE PRESSING QUESTION THIS RAISES IS WHAT IT HOPED TO ACCOMPLISH BY THIS. THAT QUESTION IS BEING EXAMINED AT THE TOP LEVELS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT RIGHT NOW.

-0-